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Practitioner's Docket No. 1779-9

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Patent application
of _____
Inventor(s)
for _____
Title of invention

the specification of which is being transmitted herewith

OR

In re application of: NAKAZATO, Tokiya
Application No.: 10 / 648,031 Group No.: 1753
Filed: August 26, 2003 Examiner:
For: AUTOMATIC IN SITU ELECTROPHORESIS METHOD AND
APPARATUS

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

CERTIFICATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.8(a) and 1.10*
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I hereby certify that, on the date shown below, this correspondence is being:


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(Information Disclosure Statement [6-1]—page 1 of _____)

NOTE: "An information disclosure statement shall be considered by the Office if filed by the applicant:

- (1) Within three months of the filing date of a national application;
 - (2) Within three months of the date of entry of the national stage as set forth in § 1.491 in an international application; or
 - (3) Before the mailing date of a first Office action on the merits, whichever event occurs last."
- 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b).

NOTE: "Each individual associated with the filing and prosecution of a patent application has a duty of candor and good faith in dealing with the Office, which includes a duty to disclose to the Office all information known to that individual to be material to patentability as defined in this section." 37 C.F.R. § 1.56(a).

"Individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application within the meaning of this section are:

- (1) each inventor named in the application;
- (2) each attorney or agent who prepares or prosecutes the application; and
- (3) every other person who is substantively involved in the preparation or prosecution of the application and who is associated with the inventor, with the assignee or with anyone to whom there is an obligation to assign the application." 37 C.F.R. § 1.56(c).

NOTE: The "duty as described in § 1.56 will be met so long as the information in question was cited by the Office or submitted to the Office in the manner prescribed by §§ 1.97(b)-(d) and 1.98 before issuance of the patent." Notice of January 9, 1992, 1135 O.G. 13 -25 at 17.

WARNING: "No information disclosure statement may be filed in a provisional application." 37 C.F.R. § 1.51(b).

List of Sections Forming Part of This Information Disclosure Statement

The following sections are being submitted for this Information Disclosure Statement:

(check sections forming a part of this statement: discard unused sections
and number pages consecutively)

1. ☒ Preliminary Statements
2. ☒ FORMS PTO/SB/08A and 08B (formerly FORM PTO-1449)
3. ☐ Statement as to Information Not Found in Patents or Publications
4. ☐ Identification of Prior Application in Which Listed Information Was Already Cited and for Which No Copies Are Submitted or Need Be Submitted
5. ☐ Cumulative Patents or Publications
6. ☒ Copies of Listed Information Items Accompanying This Statement
7. ☐ Concise Explanation of Non-English Language Listed Information Items
 - 7A. ☐ EPO Search Report
 - 7B. ☐ English Language Version of EPO Search Report
8. ☐ Translation(s) of Non-English Language Documents
9. ☒ Concise Explanation of English Language Listed Information Items (Optional)
10. ☒ Identification of Person(s) Making This Information Disclosure Statement

(complete the following, if appropriate)

Sections _____, respectively, have been continued on ADDED PAGE(S).

NOTE: "Once the minimum requirements are met, the examiner has an obligation to consider the information." Notice of April 20, 1992 (1138 O.G. 37-41, 37).

Section 1. Preliminary statements

Applicants submit herewith patents, publications or other information, of which they are aware that they believe may be material to the examination of this application, and in respect of which, there may be a duty to disclose.

The filing of this information disclosure statement shall not be construed as a representation that a search has been made (37 C.F.R. 1.97(g)), an admission that the information cited is, or is considered to be, material to patentability, or that no other material information exists.

The filing of this information disclosure statement shall not be construed as an admission against interest in any manner. Notice of January 9, 1992, 1135 O.G. 13-25, at 25.

Section 6. Copies of Listed Information Items Accompanying This Statement

NOTE: 37 C.F.R. 1.98(a)(2) requires that any information disclosure statement filed under § 1.97 shall include: "A legible copy of: (i) Each U.S. and foreign patent; (ii) Each publication or that portion which caused it to be listed; and (iii) All other information or that portion which caused it to be listed, except that no copy of a U.S. patent application need be included . . ."

NOTE: The wording in § 1.98(a)(2)(iii) makes it clear that the requirement to submit a copy of each item of information listed in an information disclosure statement does not apply to the citation of a U.S. patent application. Notice of January 9, 1992, 1135 O.G. 13-25, at 14.

Legible copies of all items listed in Forms PTO/SB/08A and 08B (formerly Form PTO-1449) accompany this information statement.

(complete the following, if applicable)

- ☐ Exception(s) to above:
 - ☐ Items in prior application, from which an earlier filing date is claimed for this application, as identified in Section 4.
 - ☐ Cumulative patents or publications identified in Section 5.

Section 9. Concise Explanation of English Language Listed Information Items (OPTIONAL)

NOTE: *"Applicants may, if they wish, provide a concise explanation of why English-language information is being submitted and how it is understood to be relevant. Concise explanations are helpful to the Office, particularly where documents are lengthy and complex and applicant is aware of a section that is highly relevant to patentability or where a large number of documents are submitted and applicant is aware that one or more are highly relevant to patentability." Notice of April 20, 1992 (1138 O.G. 37-41, 38).*

U.S. Patent No. 5,460,709, issued on October 24, 1995 to Sarrine et al., and owned by the present applicant, discloses an automatic electrophoresis method and apparatus. This apparatus is used for automatically performing medical assays and includes an electrophoresis platform which cooperates with a gantry assembly. The electrophoresis platform and the gantry assembly are movable along paths that are perpendicular to each other. An applicator assembly includes pipettes which transfer samples in a specimen tray to a electrophoresis plate mounted on the electrophoresis platform.

U.S. Patent No. 4,986,891, issued on January 22, 1991 to Sarrine et al., and owned by the present applicant, describes an automatic electrophoresis apparatus and method. In this patent, an electrophoresis machine is described in which all electrophoresis processing, scanning and densitometer functions are automatically performed under computer control. This machine includes an apparatus for automatically pipetting samples from the sample plate to the surface of the support strip. There is also an apparatus for applying electric current to the strip while simultaneously cooling it. Additionally, and furthermore, the device includes apparatus for applying and spreading fluorescent staining reagents to the strip.

U.S. Patent No. 4,909,920, issued on March 20, 1990 to Sarrine et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,890,247, issued on December 16, 1989 to Sarrine et al., and U.S. Patent No. 4,810,348, issued on March 7, 1989 to Sarrine et al., teach subject matter similar to that of U.S. Patent No. 4,986,891 and are all owned by the present applicant.

U.S. Patent No. 4,391,689, issued on July 5, 1983 to Golias and U.S. Patent No.

4,360,418, issued on November 23, 1982, both owned by the present applicant, describe an automated electrophoresis and staining apparatus and method. Such prior art includes an electrophoresis chamber and a series of vats mounted upon a platform and arranged in a row where the vats are adapted to contain, respectively, a liquid stain and a series of plate processing solutions. The plate holder rack, having a horizontal open frame, supports an upright electrophoresis plate or support medium onto which has been applied a sample for electrophoretic fractionization. The plate is nested within the chamber within an electrophoretic circuit for a predetermined time period. A power-operated lift and transfer assembly is provided on the base and is adapted to lift, transfer and lower the plate holder rack and plate from the chamber progressively into each of the underlying vats for a predetermined period of time in a linear stepping motion maintaining the plate in an upright position at all times.

Section 10. Identification of Person(s) Making This Information Disclosure Statement

The person making this statement is

(check each applicable item)

- (a) ☐ the inventor(s) who signs below

SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR

(type name of inventor who is signing)

- (b) ☐ an individual associated with the filing and prosecution of this application (37 C.F.R. § 1.56(c))

SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR

(type name of inventor who is signing)

- (c) ☒ the practitioner who signs below on the basis of the information:

(check each applicable item)

- ☐ supplied by the inventor(s).
☐ supplied by an individual associated with the filing and prosecution of this application. (37 C.F.R. § 1.56(c))
☒ in the practitioner's file.

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Tel. No.: () 713-224-8080

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SIGNATURE OF PRACTITIONER

John S. Egbert

(type or print name of practitioner)

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